

Template Letter to Community Leader



Date

Contact Name

Address

Dear **Community Leader Name:**

I am writing to update you on the positive impact of worksite lactation support in helping new mothers achieve their breastfeeding goals when they return to work. Worksite lactation support improves local health outcomes in local communities and strengthens our state's ability to achieve national Healthy People 2020 objectives for infant health. On behalf of the Northern Colorado Breastfeeding Coalition (NCBC), I am working with local community partners to increase awareness of the need for family-friendly worksite policies and resources for breastfeeding employees.

Lactation support programs are cost effective and generate a \$3 return for every \$1 invested, according to *The Business Case for Breastfeeding*, prepared by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Additionally, the U.S. Surgeon General recognizes that employers who provide these types of programs for nursing mothers see increased employee loyalty, reduced turnover, reduced absenteeism, and increased productivity. Businesses can also cut their health-care costs because breastfeeding boosts an infant's immune system, meaning fewer trips to the doctor for common childhood illness such as ear and gastrointestinal infections. Children who are breastfed are also protected against rare but serious conditions such as severe lower respiratory infections, leukemia, necrotizing enterocolitis, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) as well as chronic health conditions such as type 2 diabetes, asthma, and childhood obesity. Breastfeeding also lowers the mother's risk for type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, breast and ovarian cancer, and other poor health outcomes.

Breastfeeding is the standard for infant feeding. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life. Studies show that if 90 percent of new mothers were to follow this recommendation, \$13 billion of direct pediatric health-care costs and more than 900 lives would be saved annually in the U.S. Yet many breastfeeding mothers cite returning to work as their reason for stopping breastfeeding.

The Northern Colorado Breastfeeding-Friendly Worksite Program is a free, voluntary achievement promoted by the NCBC. Employers who provide a supportive environment for nursing employees by providing a private area and reasonable break-time for expressing breast milk, and educate staff on their worksite breastfeeding policy are designated and promoted in the community as a Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite.

As a community leader, I urge you to consider workplace lactation support when developing initiatives that serve to improve outcomes for Northern Colorado moms, babies, families, and communities.

Please contact me if you would like additional information, and visit www.nocobreastfeeding.org to learn more about achieving designation as a Northern Colorado Breastfeeding-Friendly Worksite.

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Organization Name

Contact Information